on bio-fuel;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) by when, this national policy would be framed; and

(d) the main purposes of this policy?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (d) After the success of the Pilot Projects on blending 5% ethanol in petrol in the year 2001, the Government implemented the 5% ethanol-blended petrol programme in natfied sugar producing States/adjoinng States and Union Territories. According to the parameters of the programme, *w.e.f.* 27.10.2004, if the price at which ethanol is offered for the programme is comparable to the price of ethanol for alternative uses, and is comparable to the delivery price of petrol at the notified locations, and if the supply of ethanol can be maintained at such prices, supply of 5% ethanol-blended-petrol in notified areas is mandatory.

For promotion of bio-diesel, the Planning Commission had set up a Committee on Development of Bio-fuel which recommended the launching of a National Mission on Bio-diesel with a special focus on the plantation of Jatropha curcas. The Ministry of Rural Development has been made the nodal Ministry for the National Mission on Bio-diesel and that Ministry has recently got a Detailed Project Report (DPR) prepared by The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI).

Road map for self-sufficiency in oil sector

2906. SHRI C.PERUMAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any road map has been prepared to make the country self-sufficient in oil sector in the near future;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) Given the increasing gap between demand

and domestic availability of crude oil, self-sufficiency is not a policy objective. But appropriate measures to substantially accelerate exploratory activities for enhancing domestic oil and gas production are being taken. These include the following:—

(i) improving the recovery factor from existing major fields by implementing Enhanced Oil Recovery (EOR)/Improved Oil Recovery (IOR) schemes, in particular, Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) have taken up 15 field for this purpose at an estimated investment of Rs. 10,972 crore, which would also help in accelerating oil production from these fields;

(ii) increasing exploration efforts through the New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP); Under the four rounds of NELP, Production Sharing, Contracts (PSCs) have been singed for 90 blocks. The Fifth Round of NELP has been declared open as of 4th January, 2005 to invite bids for 20 exploration blocks; Bids close on 31st May, 2005.

(iii) exploring new areas, especially deep waters and difficult frontier areas, as also the deeper layers of already producing fields; and

(iv) developing newly discovered field speedily and stepping up the use of new technologies for seismic surveys, work over, stimulation operations, drilling of wells etc. in producing areas;

Besides, in keeping with the objectives of the Energy Security section of the National Common Minimum Programme, ONGC Videsh Ltd. (OVL), as well as other national oil companies such as IOC, OIL and GAIL, have been pursuing the acquisition of equity oil abroad, as well as the acquisition abroad of oil and gas exploration acreages and producing properties. These companies have Paticipating Interests in oil and gas projects located in Vietnam, Sudan, Russia, Iraq, Myanmar, Libya, Syria, Australia, Ivory Coast, Qatar and Egypt.

(c) Does not arise.

Import of crude from Saudi Arabia on long term basis

2907. SHRI MURLI DEORA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Western countries are normally importing crude from Saudi